



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa



COP22 Africa pavilion event

Date: 12th November 2016 Time: 14h00 – 15h30

Venue: Africa Pavilion, Salle 1

Title: The Blue Economy and Climate Change in the context of Sustainable Development

Introduction

Oceans, rivers, lakes and other natural waterways are a fundamental source of food, water, and livelihoods for people worldwide. Damage to these resources and their ecosystems is likely to affect the livelihoods of present and future generations, as well as the fauna and flora that live and depend on these resources. Human activity such as overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution and the impact of climate change are having negative effects on these ecosystems and resources.

Scientific evidence indicates that Small Island Developing States (SIDS), by virtue of their geography, will become increasingly most vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change such as sea-level rise and storm surges, floods, droughts and extreme weather events, coral bleaching, coastal erosion and changing precipitation patterns. This evidence indicates significant threats to the ocean and marine ecosystem, from which SIDS derive their livelihoods and very existence.

Action to address the negative impacts, build resilience and support for adaptation to climate change, among others, is required. This should embrace the principles of Sustainable Development, ensuring development patterns that protect the natural resources, while tapping on their potential for economic and human development.

The Blue Economy approach can be viewed as an integrative and comprehensive approach, taking into account immediate and long term objectives, within the different interconnected

sectors, while incorporating the local, regional and global social, environmental and economic issues of development in coastal, island states and land-locked countries.

The African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States is one of the largest groups of developing countries in the world consisting of 79 Member States of which 37 are Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and 39 are Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States is organizing this side event on the margins of the 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP12), which will take place from 7 to 18 November 2016 in Marrakesh, Morocco.

This is the fourth in a series of meetings on the Blue Economy organized by the ACP Secretariat. The first was a side event, *Responding to climate change in Small Island and coastal States in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific region* held on the margins of COP 21 in Paris. It fostered dialogue and exchange of best practices among SIDS and coastal countries in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific on the use of their marine and coastal resources to promote climate change adaptation and mitigation actions, within the context of sustainable development. An ACP Regional Technical Meeting was held in April 2016 in Mauritius, as a follow-up to the COP 21 side event. The *Outcome document on addressing coastal management and the blue economy*, was the output of this event. Furthermore, the ACP Secretariat launched the ACP SIDS Forum to respond to the urgency of addressing SIDS issues. The Forum will follow on-going and future work of relevance to the SIDS within the ACP Secretariat. Most recently, in July 2016, the ACP Secretariat co-organized a side event on the margins of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) titled "*Harnessing blue economy for Sustainable Development*". The event highlighted the strategic importance of the blue economy and the urgency of global governance for the sustainable management of the ocean and inland water environment.

Objectives

The main objective of the event is to facilitate dialogue and exchange of best practices among Small Island Developing States, coastal countries and countries in Africa, on how to take forth actions *on addressing coastal management and the blue economy, while supporting climate change action* within the context of suitable development. .

Organisation

The Secretary General of the ACP Group of States will deliver the welcoming remarks. High-level representatives from Small Islands, coastal States and countries from Africa, will introduce key elements of the Blue Economy based on priority actions identified in the *Outcome document on addressing coastal management and the blue economy*, within the context of the climate change talks. This will be supported by illustrations of on-going and planned activities within ACP countries aiming at harnessing the opportunities offered by the Blue Economy to support their economic and human development within the context of sustainable development.

Outputs

Key messages from this event will be shared with the participants. Post-event, the key messages will be shared among climate change and development practitioners and experts of the ACP region and beyond using the following platforms: the European Union's Capacity for Development (Cap4Dev) website; the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA +) Intra-ACP

webpage, the website of the ACP Secretariat and on websites of the regional/national ACP representatives present at the event as well as during the frequent ACP Ministerial gatherings.

Draft Program	
5 min.	<p>Chair: Mr. Viwanou Gnassounou, Assistant Secretary General – Department of Sustainable Development and Trade, Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States</p> <p>Opening Remarks by H.E. Dr. Patrick I. Gomes, Secretary General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States</p>
10 min.	<p>Setting the Stage: Challenges and opportunities for ACP Island States and coastal zones</p> <p>Presentation by Samoa (tbc)</p>
40 min. (10 min each)	<p>High Level Discussion on Experiences across ACP Regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa: TBC • Caribbean: TBC • Pacific: Minister from Fiji (TBC)
30 min.	<p>Q & A and Discussions</p>
5 min.	<p>Closing Remarks: H.E. Dr. Patrick I. Gomes, Secretariat General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States</p>

Key questions to be addressed by the presentations

- What opportunities does the Blue Economy offer to climate change adaptation and mitigation?
- What are the main obstacles in achieving the identified opportunities?
- What are the national, regional and international policy and regulatory options?
- Blue Economy and the 2030 agenda for development: what are the environmental and ecosystem implications? What are the risks and uncertainties surrounding future developments? How do we address the environmental concerns?
- How would you like to see the Blue Economy accounted for in the climate change negotiations?
- What is your key message to negotiators on the Blue Economy?
- What are you doing in your country/region to ensure that the Blue Economy supports efforts on climate change adaptation and/or mitigation?